Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 081242 TOSEC 030065
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S E C R E T STATE 081242 TOSEC 030065

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM GELE, FOR THE US SALT DELEGATION

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PARM, UR, SW

SUBJECT: BESSMERTNYKH ON ASAT, CONVENTIONAL ARMS TALKS AND ARBATOV ARTICLE

1. BESSMERTNYKH CAME IN AT HIS REQUEST TO SEE ME MARCH 29TH. ON ASAT, HE HANDED ME THE FOLLOWINGTALKINGPOINTS AS A NON-PAPER:

2. BEGIN TEXT: THE SOVIET SIDE IS PREPARED TO HOLD BI-LATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THE US ON ANTI-SATELLITE SYSTEMS.

3. WE TOOK NOTE OF THE CONSIDERATIONS EXPRESSED BY THE US SIDE. WE THINK, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD BE HARDLY JUSTIFIED TO PREDETERMINE POSSIBLE CONCRETE RESULTS OF THE CONSULTA-
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TIONS EVEN BEFORE THEY HAVE BEGUN. IN VIEW OF THE NEWNESS OF THE ENTIRE PROBLEM, ITS COMPLEXITY AND MANYSIDENESS, THE FIRST STAGE OF THE CONSULTATIONS SHOULD EVIDENTLY BE OF A STRICTLY PRELIMINARY CHARACTER AS IT WAS THE CASE WITH SOME OTHER QUESTIONS.

4. WE BELIEVE, IN PARTICULAR, THAT IT WILL BE NECESSARY

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TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON WHAT ACTIONS IN GENERAL COULD BE REGARDED AS ACTS OF AN ATTACK ON SPACE OBJECTS. OF COURSE, WE SHOULD DEAL WITH THE ACTIVITIES OF ALL THE SYSTEMS AND MEANS WHICH POSSESS POTENTIAL ANTI-SATELLITE CAPABILITY, INCLUDING MANNED SPACECRAFT OF MULTIPLE USE.

5. IN VIEW OF THE NECESSITY TO GET THOROUGHLY PREPARED FOR THE FORTHCOMING CONSULTATIONS WE PROPOSE TO COMMENCE THEM ON ABOUT THE 10TH OF MAY. AS TO THE PLACE, IT IS TO BE AGREED UPON LATER.

6. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE CONSULTATIONS SHOULD BE OF ENTIRELY INDEPENDENT AND CONFIDENTIAL NATURE. (END TEXT).

7. AS HIS ORAL PRESENTATION, HE STRESSED THE COMPLICATED NATURE OF THESE TALKS, THE NEED TO DISCUSS ALL ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM INCLUDING DEFINITIONS, THAT THE INITIAL CONSULTATIONS WOULD BE "PRELIMINARY," AND THAT THESE TALKS IN NO WAY WOULD BE TIED TO ANY OTHER NEGOTIATIONS. HE USED THE LATTER POINT TO JUSTIFY NOT ACCEPTING OUR PROPOSAL FOR GENEVA AS THE SITE.

8. I MERELY THANKED HIM FOR HIS GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE AND SAID THAT YOU WOULD MAKE THE NEXT RESPONSE.

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9. ON THE CONVENTIONAL ARMS LIMITATION TALKS SET FOR HELSINKI ON MAY 4TH, BESSMERTNYKH SAID HIS GOVERNMENT ACCEPTED THE LANGUAGE OF OUR PRESS RELEASE WITH ONE EXCEPTION--THEY WOULD LIKE TO SUBSTITUTE THE WORD CONSULTATION" FOR OUR PHRASE "WORKING GROUP." HE SAID THAT THE WORKING GROUP PHRASE HAD NOT BEEN USED IN OTHER PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THAT THEY WOULD PREFER NOT USING IT IN ANY CONTEXT. I SAID I SAW NO PROBLEM WITH THE CHANGE BUT WOULD GET BACK TO HIM IF THERE WERE ONE. AS FAR AS A RELEASE DATE FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT, HE SUGGESTED ON/ABOUT APRIL 28TH. HIS REASONING WAS THAT IF WE DID IT SOONER, "PEOPLE WOULD FORGET ABOUT IT."

10. ON THE ARBATOV ARTICLE, I ASKED HIM TO EXPLAIN ITS MEANING. HE SAID THAT IT WAS "OF GREAT IMPORTANCE, MILD, AND NOT INTENDED TO BE OFFENSIVE OR CRITICAL OF THE PRESIDENT IN ANY WAY, AND FOCUSSED ON THE SALT SITUATION AND NOT ANYTHING ELSE."

11. HE THEN STARTED TO ASK A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ABOUT ERW AND I SIMPLY SAID THAT I WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS THIS AT ALL. HE SAID, "WELL, I CAN ONLY HOPE THAT

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THE WASHINGTON POST"ARTICLE IS RIGHT AND NOT"THE NEW YORK TIMES"ARTICLE, EVEN THOUGH OUR PROPAGANDISTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU DEPLOY THE NEUTRON BOMB." COOPER

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